

Bridging a Community

Facts You Should Know

March 2002

Please read the referendum question carefully and help decide your City's future.

De Pere residents will vote on a binding referendum April 2, which asks:

“Shall the City of De Pere rebuild or repair, but retain a two-lane bridge on the existing Claude Allouez Bridge site in downtown De Pere?”

Voting “Yes” and supporting the referendum

- Alternatives are **no** longer available.
- Rehabilitation will close the bridge to vehicles and pedestrians **for up to 16 months**.
- The existing bridge will be rehabilitated in the **exact same location** as directed by the referendum. WisDOT will **not** build a single, new 2-lane bridge.
- **No federal dollars will be available.** The Federal Highway Administration has stated in writing it will not support a project that does not meet current or future traffic needs.
- The service life of this bridge will be extended 10 to 20 years. Before that time, this issue will need to be **revisited**.

Opposing the referendum and voting “No”

- **All** alternatives and options are **still available**.
- The existing bridge will **not be shut down** during construction, unless the no build option is selected.
- The city and state **can continue** working with the public to select and refine the best alternative for the city. **Public involvement continues.**
- All alternatives include a **25 mph speed limit** and **traffic signals** to control speed on the bridge.
- All alternatives **include 75% state and federal funding, except the no build option.**
- All alternatives are **intended to reduce congestion** and **be bike and pedestrian** friendly to improve the quality of life in De Pere, except the no build option.
- All alternatives will be **aesthetically pleasing and sensitive** to the historic character of downtown De Pere.

Did You Know?

Brown County identified a need for expanded capacity on the bridge in 1996. In 1997, the City of De Pere began exploring bridge alternatives to address expansion.

The 70-year-old Claude Allouez Bridge has been repaired 27 times since 1977.

Of the daily traffic count, 95% is light vehicle traffic and only 5% is heavy truck traffic.

On average, more than 26,500 vehicles use the bridge daily.

By the year 2020, even if a new bridge is constructed south of De Pere, traffic on the Claude Allouez Bridge is projected to increase to 34,400 vehicles. Without a new bridge south of De Pere, traffic will increase to 42,700 vehicles per day.

None of the alternatives being considered impact St. Francis Church or Notre Dame Schools.

[For more information](#)

Kim Rudat, WisDOT
Communications
Manager
(920) 492-5643
or email:
greenbay.dtd@dot.
state.wi.us



**Bridging a Community
Facts you should know**
WisDOT, District 3
P.O. Box 28080
Green Bay, WI 54324-0080

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You asked about this...

Nearly 500 De Pere residents attended a bridge informational meeting on Monday, March 18, 2002. Here are some of their frequently asked questions.

What about costs?

Bridge rehabilitation is paid for by the state, but no additional improvements (i.e. bike lanes, bridge re-location) can be made using state funds. In addition, De Pere will absorb an estimated \$1 million in cost to provide adequate fire and police safety to both sides of the river. Travel times will also increase and, according to both the City and the De Pere Area Business Alliance, area businesses will experience significant revenue loss.

A new bridge or bridges with expanded capacity would receive 75% funding from the state and federal governments. The remaining 25% would be a local cost share (city and county).

Federal funds cannot be applied to a single, new two-lane bridge. Should the existing bridge be rehabilitated, that money would be reassigned to another state project elsewhere.

Why does it need to be closed for rehabilitation?

Studies show the bridge is in poor condition and in need of major repairs. The repairs will include removal of the deck which will require the bridge to be closed.

Will the new bridge(s) be a freeway?

No! A **25 mph speed limit** will be maintained. Traffic signals at the east intersection will also control speed on the bridge.

Will a new bridge(s) impact the Fox River Trail?

No. The new bridge will provide an access to the trail.

Why will the new bridge(s) incorporate 4 lanes?

Although national guidelines recommend a six lane bridge with corresponding larger approaches for the volume of traffic, WisDOT is only planning for four lanes and smaller approaches. This will help preserve the very historic look and feel of downtown De Pere.

But a county bridge south of De Pere will make a difference, right?

Yes it will, but not how some might think. It will help alleviate **projected future** traffic growth in De Pere, but studies show it will not reduce current traffic in De Pere.

A note from WisDOT District Director George McLeod

“WisDOT is providing this information to help you make an informed decision when you vote. **We are at a decision point.** Something needs to be done about the bridge to keep it safe. The budget is in place to begin working on the bridge in 2005. Plans need to be readied for one of the alternatives or bridge rehabilitation **during the next two years.** Please vote April 2.”